

Amendments of the Claims:

A detailed listing of all claims in the application is presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. All claims being currently amended are submitted with markings to indicate the changes that have been made relative to immediate prior version of the claims. The changes in any amended claim are being shown by strikethrough (for deleted matter) or underlined (for added matter).

B1
AX

1. (currently amended) A method of creating an automated natural language interactive product comparison guide for providing customers with comparisons between a plurality of products in a class, each product having a plurality of features, each feature having a scoring function which is used to rank different products based on their values of that feature, and each customer being associated with a user profile comprising a collection of values of features that are considered to be suitable for different types of users of the product class, comprising the steps of:

- a) ~~developing a set of features that apply to the products in the class;~~
- b) ~~developing groupings of these features, which serve to organize them thematically, and which groupings can themselves be viewed as features;~~
- e) ~~developing a scoring function for each feature, which is used to rank different products based on their values of that feature;~~
- d) developing feature text snippets for each feature, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular product features;
- e) ~~developing user profiles, the profiles being collections of values of features that are considered to be suitable for different types of users of the product class, and which can serve to help users of the product guide narrow down their product preferences quickly;~~
- f) b) developing user profile text snippets for each user profile, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular user profiles;

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c) providing generic phrases such that combining the generic phrases with feature text snippets and user profile text snippets produces a comparison guide for the products featuring dynamically generated fluent text that is used to convey product analyses and recommendations tailored to the user requirements and preferences.

2. (cancelled)

A2
3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, in which step (d) (a) further comprises the step of testing the feature text snippets of the features.

4. (cancelled)

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5. (original) The method of claim 1, in which step (f) (b) further comprises the step of testing the user profile text snippets of the profiles.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing access to the product comparison guide over a computer network.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of: ~~g) providing customers with product comparisons over a computer network, using the user profile snippets, feature snippets, scoring functions and feature values.~~ by combining the generic phrases with feature text snippets and user profile text snippets produces a comparison guide for the products featuring dynamically generated fluent text that is used to convey product analyses and recommendations tailored to the user requirements and preferences.

8. (currently amended) A method of providing customers with natural language product comparisons over a computer network comprising the steps of:

~~a) creating a product comparison guide for providing customers with comparisons between a plurality of products in a class, each product having a plurality of features, comprising the steps of:~~

~~i) developing a set of features that apply to the products in the class;~~

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- ii) ~~developing groupings of these features, which serve to organize them thematically, and which groupings can themselves be viewed as features;~~
 - iii) ~~developing a scoring function for each feature, which is used to rank different products based on their values of that feature;~~
 - iv) ~~developing text snippets for each feature, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular product features;~~
 - v) ~~developing user profiles, the profiles being collections of values of features that are considered to be suitable for different types of users of the product class, and which can serve to help users of the product guide narrow down their product preferences quickly;~~
 - vi) ~~developing snippets for each user profile, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular user profiles;~~

a) creating an automated interactive product comparison guide for providing customers with comparisons between a plurality of products in a class, each product having a plurality of features, each feature having a scoring function which is used to rank different products based on their values of that feature, and each customer being associated with a user profile comprising a collection of values of features that are considered to be suitable for different types of users of the product class, comprising the steps of:

- i) developing feature text snippets for each feature, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular product features;
- ii) developing user profile text snippets for each user profile, the snippets being phrases to be used when describing or referring to particular user profiles;

iii) providing generic phrases:

- B1
A3
- b) accepting a request from a customer over a computer network, the request including preferred values for product features;
 - c) generating a ranked list of products using preferred values entered in step (b), product feature data, and feature scoring functions, such that rankings are based on each product's score for each feature as computed using its scoring function, which is then weighted according to the preferred values;
 - d) combining generic phrases with feature text snippets for individual features and user profile text snippets for user profiles to generate a display comprising a comparison guide for the products featuring dynamically generated fluent text that is used to convey product analyses and recommendations tailored to the user requirements and preferences; and
 - e) returning the display to the customer over the computer network.

9. (original) The method of claim 8, in which step (b) further comprises the step of storing the preferred values in a user preferences database.

10. (original) The method of claim 8, in which the preferred values from step (b) are requested by specifying a user preference from a database.

11. (original) The method of claim 8, in which the display generated in step (d) comprises at least a display and explanation of product rankings.

12. (original) The method of claim 8, in which the display generated in step (d) comprises at least a display and explanation of a comparison between several products.

A4

13. (new) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of developing groupings of the features, which serve to organize them thematically, and which groupings can themselves be viewed as features.

- B) ~~14. (new) The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of developing groupings of the features, which serve to organize them thematically, and which groupings can themselves be viewed as features.~~
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